

Evidence-Based Ideas for Using Additional Title I Funds Under the Economic Stimulus Bill

This handout is designed to give school personnel ideas on how to spend the additional Title I funds that will become available under the Economic Stimulus Bill. These funds are expected to become available to school districts in May 2009.

At this time, we are firmly being informed that the additional funding under the stimulus bill is a one time only grant that may be expended for two years (March 19, 2009 – September 30, 2011). The department **highly recommends** that school districts look for ways to spend additional funds that will not force them to eliminate staff in two years or obligate the district to pay for staff once the funding is gone. This handout is meant to share ideas on ways to spend the additional funds that will not obligate the district once the funding disappears.

There is a huge national focus on the transparency of these funds. States and districts will need to specifically list on their websites how these funds were utilized. Therefore, school personnel need to think carefully how to spend these additional funds so that everyone will see that these funds were used wisely.

■ Extended Learning Time

- Title I After School Programs

Providing a Title I paid after school program is an opportune way to utilize the additional funds without hiring additional permanent staff. Schools can use existing staff to work in the after school program. The staff does not need a Title I credential. Many schools are implementing Title I after school programs in an effort to meet the NCLB goals. Any school offering a Title I after school program should download and review the following two documents:

- ✓ Guidance on Operating a Title I After School Program in a Targeted Assistance School
- ✓ Question & Answer Sheet on Operating a Title I After School Program

These two documents, in addition to a number of other resources on after-school programming, are available at www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/resource/aftrschl/index.shtm on the Title I website.

Districts who receive 21st Century after school funds are still encouraged to use Title I funds to support or add to that program. You can hire additional teachers to work in the 21st Century program that target at-risk students to provide them with additional instruction to help them achieve.

- Title I Summer School Programs
Providing a Title I paid summer school program is again an opportune way to utilize the additional funds without hiring additional permanent staff. Schools can use existing staff to work in the summer school program. The staff does not need a Title I credential. Many schools are implementing Title I summer school programs in an effort to meet the NCLB goals. Any school offering a Title I summer school program should download and review the following document:

- ✓ Guidance on Operating a Title I Summer School Program in a Targeted Assistance School

This document, in addition to a number of other resources on summer school programming is available on the Title I website at www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/resource/aftrschl/index.shtm.

■ Professional Development

- Data Analysis
Many districts and schools struggle to understand their data and AYP reports so that they can target their areas of need. The additional funds can be used to help with this process. The Title I office is working to compile a list of educators/consultants that can help school personnel with data analysis.
- Study Groups
Study groups can be the foundation of your professional development program. This type of collegial work provides an opportunity for growth not realized when working in isolation in the classroom. When these individuals come together and focus on student learning, the range of knowledge, resources, and experience they bring to the process are blended together for a more powerful impact on all of their students.
- Instructional Coaches
The use of instructional coaches can be a powerful intervention with great potential to improve teacher performance and raise academic achievement. Numerous resources on using Title I funds for instructional coaches can be accessed at www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/coaches.shtm on the department's website.
- Leadership Coaches
A term discussed frequently during recent meetings held in Texas at the National Title I Conference was leadership coach. Similar in nature to an instructional coach, a leadership coach works with principals to help them review data and set goals to enable schools to make Adequate Yearly Progress. The Title I office is working on a list of leadership coaches that school personnel could contact for assistance.

■ Early Childhood Education

- Preschool Programs

Several districts/schools in North Dakota are beginning to use a portion of their Title I funding to pursue preschool programming. Preschool is such a strong focus nationwide. It is possible that when this funding disappears in two years, there may be other federal funding, or even state funds, available for preschool programs.

- Home Visits/Instructional Packets

You don't have to actually offer a preschool program during the regular school year to target some of your funding to helping young children transition into school. Some schools are doing home visits or providing instructional packets to at-risk preschool children.

- Kindergarten Jump Start Programming

Schools can offer an academic-rich program during the summer for those students who will be attending kindergarten in the fall to jump start them into school.

■ Parental Involvement

Parental involvement has always been a key component in the Title I law. Again, using the additional funds for parent involvement is an opportune way to use the funds.

- Designate a staff member as a parental involvement coordinator
- Sponsor monthly parent-student nights with specific focus on how to help students
- Pay teachers over the summer months to create activity packets for parents to work with their children at home

■ Program Improvement

Based on the 2007-2008 AYP data, 169 schools did not make AYP. Therefore, we are anticipating a significant increase in the number of schools that will be identified for improvement for the 2009-2010 school year. When schools are identified for improvement, the district needs to set aside a significant portion of their Title I funds (up to 30%) for improvement related activities.

These funds will be instrumental to schools that are identified for improvement in April 2009. The funds can help make up for the shortage caused by setting aside up to 30% for program improvement related activities.

■ Individualized Instruction

- One-on-One Tutoring

Struggling or non-proficient students can benefit enormously from access to one-on-one tutoring. This is yet another activity where you can pay existing staff to tutor at-risk students before or after school, on Saturdays, or during the summer.

- Individual Learning Plan (ILP)

The idea behind an ILP is that the needs of individual students are different, and thus, must be addressed differently (one size does not fit all). An ILP typically looks at student strengths and weaknesses, sets individual goals, outlines research based interventions to attain goals, assigns the individual responsible, sets a timeline, and finally, evaluates progress.

An ILP can be a powerful tool for individualizing instruction, promoting a team approach, and collaborative effort in teaching (i.e., teacher, resource staff, and parents all working together to help the student) and subsequently raising the academic achievement of at-risk students.

Title I funds can be used to pay personnel to create an ILP on all non-proficient students. This is an excellent way to use existing staff without hiring new teachers.

■ Response to Intervention (RTI)

RTI professional development or other interventions are another recommended use of the additional funding. The department's Title I and Special Education units, in conjunction with outside educators, are working to put together RTI training packages for school personnel.

■ Provide Academic Assistance to Middle and High School Students

Historically, most districts have focused their funds at the elementary level. The stimulus bill requires a certain percentage of the school improvement funds to be spent at the middle and high school levels.

If you have a middle or high school program during the school day, the teacher needs a Title I credential, because there is no other way to code them on the MIS03. However, if you provide tutoring services to this age group after school, you need to use certified teachers but they don't need a Title I credential. Again, this would allow you to use existing staff rather than hiring additional teachers that you may not be able to sustain in the future.